



Norman H. Bangerter
Governor

Kenneth L. Alkema
Executive Director

Don A. Ostler, P.E.
Director

State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY

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Salt Lake City, Utah
(801) 538-6146
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M/021/004

DOGM
MINERALS PROGRAM
FILE COPY

Reply to: State of Utah
Division of Water Quality
Department of Environmental Quality
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4870

September 11, 1991

RECEIVED

SEP 13 1991

DIVISION OF
OIL GAS & MINING

Mr. Larry A. Drew, Manager
Environmental Affairs
Hecla Mining Company
P.O. Box C-8000
6500 Mineral Drive
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814-1931

RE: Ground Water Permit
Escalante Tailing Pond

Dear Mr. Drew:

The Division of Water Quality (DWQ) attended a meeting with the Division of Oil Gas and Mining (DOGM) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on August 21, 1991 in which capping the Hecla tailings pond at Escalante, Utah was the main subject of conversation. Unfortunately, Hecla was not able to attend this meeting. The discussion by the three agencies is well described in DOGM's letter to Hecla, written August 23, 1991.

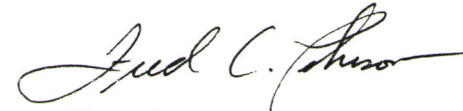
The DWQ was unaware of Hecla's preparation of an additional ground water investigation at the tailings pond site, as indicated in the DOGM letter. We will be willing to review this report when received. However, the DWQ believes that Hecla would be better served by making the application, than undertaking additional ground water studies at this time. Hecla was notified by the Executive Secretary on January 31, 1991, that according to Rule R448-6-6, a ground water discharge permit is required for this tailings facility. The DWQ is reiterating that Hecla has one year from that date to make an application. After obtaining the permit, Hecla could then proceed with constructing the cap, and with other reclamation work. We believe this would be of best interest to all concerned.

Larry A. Drew
Page 2
September 11, 1991

The DWQ is willing to discuss this permit issue with Hecla at your convenience. You may call Larry Mize or Mack Croft of the Ground Water Section at 538-6146, for questions about obtaining the permit.

Sincerely,

Utah Water Quality Board

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Don A. Ostler".

for Don A. Ostler, P.E.
Executive Secretary

DAO:MGC:rp

cc: Wayne Thomas
DOGM
Grant Bagley

Q:HBCLA.LTR